

Message Text

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42

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-11 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 ARA-06 /082 W

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R 111445Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7741

INFO AMEMBASSY BLANTYRE

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY MASERU

AMEMBASSY MBABANE

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

USUN NEW YORK 315

C O N F I D E N T I A L GABORONE 0393

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, RH BC US

SUBJECT: ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION REGARDING SECRETARY'S
COMMENTS ON RHODESIA

REF: GABORONE 369

1. DURING A GENERAL DISCUSSION WITH SECRETARY FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS CHARLES TIBONE, HE REFERRED TO THE STATEMENT MADE BY SECRETARY ON RHODESIA TO THE HOUSE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE AND RECENTLY PASSED TO MINISTER MOGWE (REFTEL). TIBONE HAS JUST RETURNED FROM PERSONAL BUSINESS AT HOME AND SAID THAT HE HAS NOT BEEN THOROUGHLY BRIEFED ON THE CURRENT BOTSWANA POSITION ON RHODESIA. HOWEVER, HE SUGGESTED THAT A PERSONAL BASIS HE WOULD LIKE TO MAKE A COMMENT ON THE AMERICAN STATEMENT.

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2. HE SAID HE RECOGNIZED THE VALUE OF THE CALL FOR MAJORITY RULE AND THE OFFER BY THE UNITED STATES TO USE ITS "INFLUENCE" TO ASSIST IN GAINING MAJORITY RULE. HOWEVER, MOST AFRICAN'S DO NOT UNDERSTAND THE INTENT OF THE STATEMENT. THEY FOCUS ON THE SECOND HALF REFERRING TO THE CUBANS AND INTERPRET THAT TO MEAN THAT THE UNITED STATES IS MOVING TOWARD SUPPORT OF THE MINORITY REGIME IN RHODESIA AGAINST THE BLACK LIBERATION FORCES AND THEIR POTENTIAL CUBAN ALLIES. HE SAID THAT THIS IS SO BECAUSE THE STATEMENT MAKES NO REFERENCE TO THE ANC OR OTHER INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENTS AND NO STATEMENT OF INTENTION TO SUPPORT THEM IN THEIR EFFORT. IN HIS VIEW, THE FORMULATION BY THE ABSENCE OF THIS ELEMENT WEAKENS THE STAND OF AFRICANS WHO WOULD PREFER NOT TO SEE CUBAN INTERFERENCE, BY GIVING THEM NO ALTERNATIVE. HE ADDED THAT AFRICAN PUBLIC OPINION NOW TENDS TO SUPPORT THE CUBANS AS ALLIES OF THE LIBERATION FORCES, AS CONTRASTED TO THE OPPOSITION TO CUBAN SUPPORT OF A MINORITY FORCE IN ANGOLA, AND IS THEREFORE PRONE TO SEE THE UNITED STATES AS ALLIES OF THE RHODESIAN MINORITY REGIME.

3. TIBONE SAID IT IS NOT TOO LATE FOR THE UNITED STATES TO MODIFY THIS VIEW. WHAT IS REQUIRED IS A CONCRETE AND EXPLICIT STATEMENT OF SUPPORT FOR THE ANC IN ITS EFFORTS TO OBTAIN MAJORITY RULE RATHER THAN AN ABSTRACT REFERENCE TO SUPPORT FOR MAJORITY RULE ITSELF.

THOMSEN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DEMOCRACY, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 11 MAR 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ElyME
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976GABORO00393
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760092-1023
From: GABORONE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760372/aaaacims.tel
Line Count: 86
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 GABORONE 369
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ElyME
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <14 MAY 2004 by ElyME>; APPROVED <08 SEP 2004 by ElyME>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION REGARDING SECRETARY'S COMMENTS ON RHODESIA
TAGS: PFOR, RH, BC, US
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006